assistance to the people affected by such natural calamities. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Goverment by providing additional financial resources in accordance with the recommendations of Finance Commissions appointed from time to time.

Crop Insurance Scheme

470. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN.

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to discontinue the Crop Insurance Scheme; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTRUE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, it has been decided to discontinue the Experimental Crop Insurance Scheme (ECIS) implemented in the Rabi 1997-98 season in selected districts, as the scheme was found administratively infeasible and financially unviable. The original Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS) will be reintroduced in those districts/States where ECIS was implemented.

Plant Gene Expression

471. SHRI JIBON ROY:
SHRI CO. POULOSE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the observations made by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan that the terminator technology to control plant gene expressions is not suitable to Indian conditions;

(b) if so, the reasons pointed out by Dr. Swaminathan to justify his statement and

(c) whether Government will prohibit this technology coming to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Dr. Swaminathan believes that farmers should enjoy certain basic rights as a cultivator and as a protector and conserver of the gene pool.

(c) Indian Council of Agricultural Research has seriously taken note of this issue as early as March, 1998. Further in May, 1998, a meeting on the issue was held which involved experts from Indian Council of Agricultural Research Department of Biotechnology and Delhi University. Notes were sent to Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (Ministry of Agriculture) so that necessary measures could be taken to meet the threat especially to ensure non-introduction of the terminator technology in India.

The patented technology may take some time before being put to use Nevertheless, Directorate of Plant Protection for Quarantine and Storage (Department of Agriculture and Cooperation. Government of India has issued the Office Memorandum No. 82-1/ •98-PPD dated 25.5.98 whereby the following steps were taken to stop the terminator technology from entering India:

(i) In no case any seed material having Terminator Gene should be imported.

(ii) Before issueing Import Permits for Seeds, Import Permit Issuing Authorities should satisfy themselves that such seeds are not having Terminator Gene.

(iii) Import Permit Issuing Authorities should request the importers to help in getting an additional declaration on the' official